

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY OES/APT/SEP:R G MORRIS

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TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 215455

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC, TGEN, RO

SUBJECT: US-ROMANIAN SCIENCE EXCHANGE NSF-NCST PROGRAM

REF: BUCHAREST 5828

1. DEPTOFFS MET AUGUST 17 WITH NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF) OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR US-ROMANIAN SCIENCE EXCHANGE IN ORDER TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER FUTURE OF THEIR PROGRAM WITH THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NCST) AND TO STRONGLY RECOMMEND A CONTINUATION IN SOME FORM OF THE NSF-NCST RELATION.

2. DEPARTMENT, WITH CONCURRENCE OF NSF, SUGGESTS AMBASSADOR CONVEY THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN MEETING AUGUST 25 WITH
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AMBASSADOR BOGDAN:

--A. NSF AND DEPARTMENT AGREE TO NEGOTIATE NEW MOU.

--B. MOU MUST BE OF DIFFERENT FORM THAN ONE CURRENTLY IN EFFECT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT EXPERIENCE GAINED AND TO SURMOUNT OBSTACLES THAT HAVE BECOME EVIDENT.

--C. NEW MOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE WORKSHOPS INSTEAD OF COOPERATIVE RESEARCH. (THIS POINT WAS MADE BY US AT MID-TERM

REVIEW IN BUCHAREST IN FEBRUARY, AND AGREED TEXT OF S&T WORKING GROUP REPORT STATES: "IF RENEWED, THE MEMORANDUM MIGHT WELL EMPHASIZE WORKSHOPS INSTEAD OF COOPERATIVE

-- " RESEARCH".)

--D. EMPHASIS ON WORKSHOPS DOES NOT NECESSARILY PRECLUDE FUTURE COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS; INDEED, SUCH PROJECTS MAY FOLLOW SUCCESSFUL WORKSHOPS.

--E. US SIDE WILL SUBMIT A WORKING DRAFT OF NEW MOU TO EMBASSY FOR TRANSMITTAL TO NCST BY SEPTEMBER 15.

--F. US SIDE WILL BE PREPARED TO MEET WITH ROMANIAN DELEGATION IN BUCHAREST IN OCTOBER FOR THE PURPOSE OF REACHING AGREEMENT ON THE TEXT FOR A NEW MOU.

--G. WE SEE NO DIFFICULTY IN THE FACT THAT THE PRESENT MOU EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 21 SINCE WE AGREE TO NEGOTIATE A NEW DOCUMENT IN OCTOBER.

3. NSF HAS PREPARED AN EXTENSIVE EVALUATION OF PROGRAM BASED ON EXPERIENCE OF US PARTICIPANTS AND ITS OWN STAFF. A DRAFT OF THE EVALUATION WAS GIVEN TO OES/SEP(MORRIS) AND EUR/EE(SCHMIDT) BY NSF ON AUGUST 17; COPY HAS BEEN POUCH-ED TO EMBASSY IN CARE OF SIMONS. FOLLOWING PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED MAY ENABLE AMBASSADOR TO ELICIT DESIRED COMMITMENT TO IMPROVEMENT FROM AMBASSADOR BOGDAN.

--A. SINCE 1973 TWELVE OUT OF 25 RESEARCH PROJECTS WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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TERMINATED SHORT OF COMPLETION, DUE TO THE FAILURE OF THE ROMANIAN SIDE TO FULFILL ITS PART OF EACH OF THE COOPERATIVE PROJECTS.

--B. NO PROJECTS WERE COMPLETED WITHIN THE PLANNED TIME PERIOD, EXCEPT FOR THREE OF THE SEMINARS.

--C. THE TRAVEL OF ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS TO THE U.S. HAS BEEN SEVERELY RESTRICTED IN RECENT YEARS, MAKING IT DIFFICULT AND OFTEN IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPLETE PROJECTS AND REPORTS.

--D. PLANNED MEETINGS WERE POSTPONED OR CANCELLED BY THE ROMANIAN SIDE, OFTEN AT THE LAST MOMENT AND FREQUENTLY WITH LITTLE IF ANY EXPLANATION.

--E. CORRESPONDENCE AND INQUIRIES FROM NSF STAFF AND COOPERATING U.S. SCIENTISTS WERE TOO FREQUENTLY UNANSWERED. AS A RESULT, SCIENTIFIC BENEFITS FROM THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM WERE MEAGER; AND FINANCIAL AND STAFF COSTS FOR ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM WERE EXTRAORDINARILY HIGH.

4. A NUMBER OF PREVIOUS REPRESENTATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO ROMANIAN OFFICIALS IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS ARISING ON THE PROGRAM:

--A. NSF ASSIGNED A STAFF MEMBER TO BUCHAREST IN 1974 TO

FACILITATE COLLABORATION BETWEEN AMERICAN AND ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS AND ASSIST IN ADMINISTERING JOINT ACTIVITIES. NSF HAS PROVIDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THIS POSITION FROM THAT DATE TO THE PRESENT.

--B. ROBERT HULL, THE FIRST NSF PROGRAM MANAGER, MADE

SEVERAL VISITS TO ROMANIA DURING 1974-6 TO RECTIFY PROBLEMS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND TO SUGGEST MEASURES OR IMPROVING THE PROGRAM.

--C. DR. BODO BARTOCHA SENT A LETTER IN JANUARY 1977 TO PROFESSOR ION URSU, PRESIDENT OF THE NCST, WHICH DISCUSSED THESE PROBLEMS AND STRESSED THE NEED FOR THEIR SOLUTION IN VIEW OF THE MOU'S EXPIRATION DATE OF 1978.

--D. DR. CHARLES ZALAR, THE PRESENT NSF PROGRAM MANAGER, CONFIDENTIAL

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DISCUSSED THE CONTINUING DIFFICULTIES WITH NCST OFFICIALS AND AMBASSADOR BARNES IN MAY 1977.

--E. AMBASSADOR BARNES MADE SEVERAL REPRESENTATIONS TO HIGH-LEVEL ROMANIAN OFFICIALS.

--F. DR. RICHARD ATKINSON SENT A LETTER TO PROFESSOR URSU IN JUNE 1977 EXPRESSING HIS CONCERNS WITH THE PROBLEMS AND THE PROSPECTS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF NSF/NCST COOPERATION.

--G. DR. ROBERT BRAINARD DISCUSSED THE PROBLEMS AND MEANS FOR AMELIORATING THEM WITH NCST OFFICIALS AND VICE FOREIGN MINISTER GLIGA DURING THE FEBRUARY 1978 MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE UMBRELLA AGREEMENT.

--H. THE PROGRAM AND ITS DEFICIENCIES HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED BY NSF AND DEPARTMENT OFFICERS WITH THE ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR NICOLAE NICOLAE, ROMANIAN SCIENCE ATTACHE ADRIAN PETRESCU, AND A NUMBER OF VISITING ROMANIAN OFFICIALS, SUCH AS: DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION, DR. GHEORGE TACHE; PRO-RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST, DR. DIMITRIE CHITORAN; SPECIAL ADVISER TO THE NCST PRESIDENT URSU, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE NCST PLANNING COMMISSION, DR. ION MANZATU. DAS GANLEY WENT INTO SUBJECT IN DETAIL WITH URSU AND WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GLIGA IN BUCHAREST IN FEBRUARY.

5. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT GOR WILL REVERSE ITS POSITION TO ALLOW MORE PREDICTABLE LONGER-TERM VISITS BY ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS TO VISIT US LABORATORIES FOR COOPERATIVE RESEARCH. THUS, REMEDIES SUGGESTED BY NSF WHICH SEEM MORE REALISTIC MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

--A. PREDICATE FURTHER COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PLANNING ON DEMONSTRATED PERFORMANCE ON THOSE PROJECTS STILL UNDER WAY.

--B. CONCENTRATE ON SHORT-TERM, INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS IN THE US AND ROMANIA THAT MINIMIZE TRAVEL BY ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS BUT STILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PROVED EXPERTISE ON BOTH SIDES.

--C. INVOLVE TO A GREATER EXTENT THE COOPERATING ROMANIAN CONFIDENTIAL

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MINISTRY IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS. SINCE IT IS THE MAIN SUBSTANTIVE BENEFICIARY, THE MINISTRY COULD ASSUME A MORE RESPONSIBLE ROLE IN ASSURING THAT THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WERE CARRIED OUT. THIS ARRANGEMENT WOULD RELIEVE NCST OF SOME OF THE BUREAUCRATIC STRAIN UNDER WHICH IT HAS SOMETIMES BUCKLED.

--D. INCLUDE DETAILED SCHEDULES IN ALL WORK PLANS TO BE

AGREED IN WRITING BEFORE PROJECTS COMMENCE.

--E. NEGOTIATE THE NEW MOU FOR A PERIOD OF NO MORE THAN THREE YEARS TO PERMIT EARLY REASSESSMENT.

--F. ESTABLISH REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTING PLANS, WITH EMBASSY TO MONITOR AND STIMULATE FULFILLMENT. CHRISTOPHER

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